115. Ways and means for meeting further educational needs.

Mr. N. G. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Mavelikara taluk) proposed to speak of certain pressing needs in educational matters and to point out the directions in which retrenchment could be effected in the Education Department itself to admit of funds being found for more crying wants. He was thankful to the Government for their far-sighted policy in having anticipated some of the needs and applied the necessary remedy. According to him, the needed reforms were the following:—

(1) Mass education had been undertaken, and rightly undertaken, as a responsibility by the Government; and allotments were being increased year after year for the purpose. But the increase went more for showing quantity than for improving quality. The increase in volume, however desirable in itself, would be a mere show and no substance, if existing schools were defective, as at present, in various details of organisation. Want of accommodation or furniture, insufficient supply of books and appliances, and a set of half-starved and discontented teachers could turn out only inferior pupils from the schools. He, therefore, strongly pleaded for better equipment of the Elementary Schools to avoid the spectacle of school-leaving (or rather school-left) men walking about as the finished products of the Malayalam schools, and unable to write or read ordinary Malayalam sentences without mistakes.

(2) While spending a reasonable amount for Elementary Education, the Government had not done as much as they should have done for Technical Education. The situation in which some parents found themselves, after their children had been at school for a number of years without passing any qualifying test, was something very deplorable. Those pupils, who might be called the educational abortions, were a burden to the family and were unfit to turn their hand to any useful purpose. That state of affairs was brought on by having only one kind of education for all. Provision had therefore to be made for different kinds of industrial or professional schools, a training in which, after the general lower elementary course, might be the means of enabling one to earn one's own bread. A Technological College or Institute or a central School of Arts would not satisfy the needs of the common people. A practical course of training in useful industries or arts provided in different centres and according to the needs of the locality, would alone be of real help to the common people in the struggle for present-day life.

(3) While more and more of help was looked forward to, at the hands of the Government, in every other direction of educational activity, the public felt that, in certain details with regard to Secondary Education, the Government was stepping into places where the activity was superfluous. The tendency to increase Departmental Secondary Schools for boys might serve to win a name without much cost. For, including all grants to the Secondary Schools and the liberal pay of the present teachers in the Government English Schools, the net cost to the Government for Secondary Education in the State was only about eighty thousand rupees last year for Higher and Lower Grade Schools put together. Travancore was in the unique position of having nine Departmental H. G. S. Schools, while in the Districts of the Madras Presidency, the British Government was satisfied with purely aided institutions. It was, therefore, time to cry halt in the policy of the Government directly expanding Secondary Education, since institutions of that kind would spring up voluntarily in needy areas and since all available funds were required for more urgent wants.

(4) In contrast to Secondary Education was the condition of Collegiate Education in the State. It was hard to contemplate what difficulties were encountered by the people in Travancore, when more than 5 out of every 12 students going in for Intermediate course every year had to find an asylum at Trichinopoly, Tinnevelly, Madras, Ernaculam or Calicut. The two Private Colleges in the State were admitting in College classes double the number of what they were accommodating a few years ago, and yet, the demand of the State was not fully met. The need was felt most keenly in Central Travancore; and it was a place of peculiar facilities for the starting

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of an additional College by the Government. The number of institutions for higher education in the State had not kept pace with the increase in the number of Secondary Schools or the increasing need and demand of the public for the same. Even in the comparatively backward Ceded Districts, the Madras Government had thought it fit to start a Government College to meet the spirit and craving of modern educational systems. It was therefore unfortunate that Travancore which, in other matters, was the foremost in the educational field in all India, was not alive to the need for providing proper facilities for liberal collegiate education.

The Member said that he had attempted to show by statistics last year how a Second Grade College could be started on an initial outlay of half a lakh of rupees and maintained with an expenditure of about Rs. 1,500 a month. The estimate need not be considered inadequate, because, in an additional College, provision for one or two indispensable branches of study would alone be sufficient and it would be comparatively easy to rear a College on the foundations of a well-equipped H. G. S. School. By way of showing that his humble estimate of expenditure was not below the mark, he said that, for the proposed Government Second Grade College for the Ceded Districts, no less an authority than the Director of Public Instruction in Madras had stated that, on calculation, 'the annual cost on behalf of the establishment came to Rs. 15,300 and the annual expenditure on behalf of Supplies and Services and Contingencies might be fixed at Rs. 1055' or a total of Rs. 16,355, which was Rs. 1,645 less than his own estimate. With regard to the initial equipment of the college, the same Director stated that a large portion of the available amount of Rs. 10,000 would alone be necessary. In the light of the above encouraging statistics at the hands of the greatest Educational authority in Southern India, the Government could, he contended, safely and with immense advantage, start a Government Second Grade College, with a small fraction of what they spent for purposes of questionable importance or utility.

The Member next proceeded to indicate the directions in which savings could conveniently be effected in the department itself.

(1) Until recently, the Elementary Schools were under two Range Inspectors. The number of Ranges had been, a few months ago, increased to three, for reasons not known to the public. As if to find work for the three officers, the Higher Grade Elementary Schools had been unnecessarily taken away from the Assistant Inspectors. It could not be that the latter class of officers most of whom were B. A.'s and L. T.'s, were, within a few months of their beginning to exercise supervision over Higher Grade Schools, found unfit for the work. The periodical increase in the staff of the Inspectorate had been going on now for some time, at one time to separate Secondary Schools, at another time to dissociate Girls' Schools, and lately, to control the Higher Grade Schools more efficiently. The recent strengthening was all the more unaccountable since, with it, had followed the appointment of a Personal Assistant to the Director. The number of Assistant Inspectors had also been recently increased. The object was of course to secure better inspection. But the only result was an expenditure out of all proportion to the need. The public felt that there was a great deal of superfluity in the inspecting staff, since Higher Grade Schools also could safely be entrusted to the Assistant Inspectors. One controlling agency to check the work of the present Assistant Inspectors would, the Member observed, be quite sufficient for the purpose instead of three or four officers of the superior grade. The amount saved in the shape of salaries, travelling allowances, office establishments and contingencies would be useful to strengthen the equipments in most of the Elementary Schools in the State, which suffered from a surfeit of inspections over inefficient and defective teaching.

(2) The public outside the Education Department failed to see the reasons for the enormous expenditure of public funds for the training of teachers. The Elementary Normal Schools scattered throughout the State turned out about a hundred teachers every year. It was difficult to see why all of them could not be trained in a central institution. If the Teachers' College at Saidapet could turn out annually

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more than a hundred L. T's., there seemed to be nothing to prevent the local Training College, which now trained about two dozen graduates and a handful of under-graduates, from undertaking the work of training teachers for the Elementary Schools also. Besides being a source of decided gain, the arrangement would give a uniform shape to the training of Elementary teachers, which was sadly lacking at present.

The expenditure for the local Training College itself seemed to be going up year by year. The latest sanction was for a European Vice-Principal. If a staff of Indian lecturers could produce systematically during the last three years of the existence of the College more than 90% of passes in the L. T. Examination, the public failed to see the need for a costly appointment with pay up to Rs. 750. Then again, the Instructor appointed for organising manual training in Travancore had become a permanent factor. In Mysore, a few years ago, when one was got down for the same purpose, he was asked to train a few Indians within four or five years and was, when that work was done and the period expired, relieved of his work. The Member did not know how many apprentices the local organiser had, within the last five years, trained and for what purpose his presence in the State was deemed indispensable for another 15 years on Rs. 500 a month. A little of economy in such and similar matters might enable the Government to start and maintain two Second Grade Colleges in the State.

(3) Nowhere was the Government's generosity more in evidence than in the Arts College at Trivandrum. The general public had every reason to doubt whether, consistently with efficiency of teaching, such a large number of hands on the staff of the College was necessary for some branches of study as they found there at present. A comparison with some of the most advanced Colleges in the Presidency demonstrated the needless superfluity of the staff in the Arts College at Trivandrum. The result of the superfluity of hands was that, while in many other Colleges, the number of hours of lecturing for each class was 15 a week on an average, it was an exception in the local College to see any lecturer doing work for more than 12 hours a week and some of them were reported to have less than 10 hours of lecturing work a week. In the light of those figures, it was no wonder that the Government was spending for Departmental Colleges alone about one-eighth of the total expenditure of 14 lakhs of rupees and odd for the departmental institutions as a whole.

(4) Where there was at one time only one Board for School Leaving Certificates for two or three years, there were at present two separate boards (one for the Secondary and the other for the Elementary).

(5) In connection with the building for one School more than two lakhs of rupees was sanctioned, while others of similar status were huddling their pupils almost to the point of suffocation in their dilapidated sheds.

(6) For the Caste Hindu Hostel at Trivandrum, the Government as a mark of its charitable management was meeting a portion of its annual expenditure, in addition to the initial outlay, while in the Victoria Hostel at Madras, a portion of the income was laid by every year.

The Member therefore requested that more careful adjustment in the educational budget and greater attention to the many desirable reforms had to be enforced in the future working of the Education Department of the State.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

116. Suggestions for improvement in the Educational systems of Travancore.

Mr. K. M. Mamman Mappilla (Member, T. I. C., Thiruvalla) said that, though Primary Education was free in the State, the people were not able to reap the benefits of the measure, as thousands of boys were refused admission into the Elementary Schools for want of accommodation. He had ascertained that the number of boys who were denied admission in 1089 were about 12,000 in the Northern Range and 15,000 in the Central Range, and, under present conditions,

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